

The regulation on ownership of radio, television and newspapers are too lax already. Consolidated ownership is not good for the owners of the airwaves -- the citizens of the United States.

This is not just a matter of local news coverage, either. Lack of competition causes lack of diversity, since there is less need to attract audiences. The audience becomes captive to corporate ownership. This has and does make the news very one-sided. The coverage of the debate on the war in Iraq caused me to look to foreign media on the internet to get some sort of balance. News of events such as the bugging of UN missions in New York by the NSA, the impression that Saddam Hussein was involved in the World Trade Center disaster, and that over 40% of U. S. citizens believe that Iraqi were the perpetrators of that disaster are very much caused by lack of competition and the scarcity of reporters is causes.

Clear Channel Communication Inc. has been staging pro-war rallies and media companies have sponsored events such as the mass crushing of Dixie Chicks CDs in Louisiana. Such activities do not foster a marketplace of ideas, but chill debate. This is a dangerous influence on American democracy.

In Seattle, KVI, owned by Foster Communications, has a talk-show host who encouraged his listeners to attend an event where Seattle congressman Jim McDermott was speaking. The news coverage of the rally said noting about the subject McDermott was speaking about - depleted uranium weapons. The "sound bite" on the news was of a man in desert fatigues shouting in the congressman's face. This is an example of media arranging the news. As the fairness doctrine was done away with long ago, the only hope individuals have is that a broad marketplace will make if possible for the audience to vote against such activities by media owners by not listening, viewing or reading their offering. If they own all the outlets, they own the message.